

Saints pin Warriors this time, 52-24

Written by Jim Ecker

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The Washington Warriors crushed Xavier in their dual wrestling meet last January by a humiliating score of 67-9 with nine pins, and when it was over the Saints spent an hour in their practice room trying to sweat that drubbing out of their system.

This time somebody should have thrown the Saints a party.

Xavier collected five pins Thursday night and drubbed Washington, 52-24, in their Mississippi Valley Conference meet at Xavier.

"I think we've made a lot of progress," Xavier Coach Ryan Chambers said. "Tonight is a good example. We have a lot to work on, but it's a good start."

Chambers took control of the Xavier wrestling program last season and installed his system in Year 1. From the look of things Thursday, Year 2 could be a lot more fun.

"Last year, one of our problems was we just couldn't flip the switch before the matches," said Sean Ickes, who got a pin in 61 seconds at 182 pounds. "We worked hard in practice, but we just couldn't translate it onto the mat."

"But tonight we did that, I think. We're going to look to keep it going."

The Saints won 10 out of 14 bouts with five pins, two technical falls, two decisions and one forfeit. Last year, the Warriors won 12 of 14 matches against the Saints, so it was almost a complete turnaround.

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"I didn't think it was going to be a knock-over by any means," Chambers said. "I thought it was going to be a knock-down, drag-out match."

Jeff Vipond registered the quickest pin of the night for Xavier in just 14 seconds at 106 pounds. Nick Drahozal also made quick work of his opponent with a pin in 51 seconds at 152 pounds. Ickes got his stick in 61 seconds, Camden Chicchelly got a mat-slapper in 2:19 at 113 pounds and Michael Maher pinned his man in 2:36 at 220 pounds.

Drew McGraw (138) and Philip Waddell (170) collected technical falls for the Saints.

Ickes helped the Xavier football team reach the championship game of the Class 4A football playoffs this year for Coach Duane Schulte. He took a week off and reported to wrestling practice this past Friday, still looking to tackle people.

"I feel like I'm a football player out on the mat when I go out there and take a guy down," Ickes said. "Coach Schulte always says that wrestling is just going out there and tackling the guy on the mat. That's what I try to do."

Ickes came out with a head of steam and dominated his man with three near-falls before getting the pin. He wrestled at 182 pounds Thursday, but he's headed down a few weight classes to 160 this season.

"He's going to be a whole different person at 160," Chambers said. "What you saw tonight is no indication of what he's going to be at '60. He's going to be a giant."

Drahozal also played football for Xavier and saw spot duty on the gridiron. The state finals were played on Friday, Nov. 16 and he was in the wrestling room that Monday.

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"I took that weekend off and then got back here," he said. "I needed to get to work."

Drahozal said he weighed about 160 pounds when the football season ended. He weighed in at 145 pounds for Thursday's meet, but wrestled at 152. He cut about 15 pounds in less than two weeks.

"Just practice," he said casually. "Going to the sauna after practice. Work out three times a day sometimes."

Chambers said there are six or seven football players on the wrestling team. He said they've carried their success in football into the wrestling room. Most of them reported for duty on Monday, just three days before their first meet.

"I told the guys: When Monday rolls around and the football players are here, the whole atmosphere in this room is going to change," he said. "And it did."

Success breeds success.

"You feel good after a good long, successful season that we had. And you want to keep that going through all your sports," Ickes remarked. "We're looking to keep that going in wrestling, too."

Clint Lembeck (126) and Jake Konzen (145) won decisions for the Saints.

Washington got three pins from Tyler Burkle (160), Noah Williams (195) and Zac Gillis (285).

XAVIER 52, WASHINGTON 24

120 - Devin Dills (W) won by forfeit.

126 - Clint Lembeck (X) dec. Trey Schuler, 7-4.

132 - Jerry Duball (X) won by forfeit.

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138 - Drew McGraw (X) tech fall Jacob Boatwright, 17-2.
145 - Jake Konzen (X) dec. Matt Ackerman, 6-2.
152 - Nick Drahozal (X) pinned Evan Lehrman, :51.
160 - Tyler Burkle (W) pinned Sam Newberry, 3:55.
170 - Philip Waddell (X) tech fall Jared Eicher, 15-0.
182 - Sean Ickes (X) pinned Skyler Cowman, 1:01.
195 - Noah Williams (W) pinned Logan Brown, 3:15.
220 - Michael Maher (X) pinned Hunter Swartz, 2:36.
285 - Zac Gillis (W) pinned Cole Turner, 1:06.
106 - Jeff Vipond (X) pinned Matt DeCamp, :14.
113 - Camden Chicchelly (X) pinned Clayton Brecht, 2:19.